

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

OF THE

TOWN OF SOUTHBOROUGH,

FOR THE YEARS 1851-52.

BOSTON:

S. E. BLAKE, 124, WASHINGTON STREET.

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ANNUAL REPORT.

YOUR Committee have attended to their duties, and submit the following Report:—

In the introduction, we remark, that, while we have been charged with certain specific duties and responsibilities, we have felt that we ought not to forget other general interests and matters of high concern connected with our schools, and, of course, with the great system of education,—such as the relation of our school-system, in its operations and results, to our sister towns and the Commonwealth; such as will enable us to fill our appropriate place in the Teachers' Institutes, and in the Normal Schools. Your Committee believe the town generally should feel such an interest in these things as not to be *behind* other towns in all educational reforms,—nay, as not to suffer in comparison with the first and foremost of them in these respects. Because not only in a *man's* education is his chief crowning excellence, but also in a *town's* education is her marked pre-eminence; because *knowledge is power, intelligent power*, that works wonders of improvement and elevation.

Your Committee propose, therefore, to contemplate the educational position of the town of Southborough as compared with other towns, as shown by the Fifteenth

Annual Report of the Secretary of the Board of Education. 1st, The number of towns in the Commonwealth is 322. 2d, From the graduated table showing the comparative amount of money appropriated by the different towns in the State for the education of each child in the town between the ages of five and fifteen years, Southborough stands No. 155; which is to her credit, for she thus appears on the right side of the middle, towards the head.

Again: From the graduated table showing the comparative amount of money appropriated by the different towns in each of the counties in the State for the education of each child in the town between the ages of five and fifteen years, Southborough stands 28,—whole number, 58. Here she stands erect, on the right side of the centre. But —

Again: From the graduated table in which all the towns in the State are numerically arranged according to the average attendance of their children upon the public schools for the year 1850–51, it appears that Southborough falls far in the rear; her number being 255, and her average attendance being only 64 and a fraction. To this fact we call your special attention: No longer be contented to let nearly three-fourths of the money raised for the education of our children be lost, simply because parents neglect to enforce constancy and punctuality upon them, but see to it that *all* the children are got out to our public schools.

Once more: From the graduated tables in which all the towns in the respective counties in the State are numerically arranged according to the mean average attendance of their children upon the public schools for the year 1850–51, of 58 towns Southborough is found among the most delinquent. Now, gentlemen, your

Committee feel that we should be stimulated by this view of our relative position to far greater diligence and effort in the advancement of the great school-reform of the present day.

Another thought connected with this subject, and one on which your Committee cannot forbear to speak somewhat plainly, is the teaching of good morals, good manners, and the maintenance of good order, in our schools. That we have fallen somewhat below the true standard in these respects cannot be denied; yet so essential is this in the estimation of the State that they have seen fit to make special provision concerning it,—making it as much the duty of instructors to teach good morals, and train their pupils in them, as to teach the rudiments of science. Your Committee feel that there is great propriety in this; that it becomes the teachers of the rising generation to seek to fix in their minds the principles of virtue, honesty, and sobriety; and more, to refine and elevate the taste, so that they may be able to present to the world models of politeness, models of all that is truly good, great, and beautiful, worthy of the mental culture and refinement of New England.

We would call special attention to this subject. Teachers cannot do it *alone*. They *must* have the *constant, efficient* aid of parents and guardians; for we would have special care taken of these fountains of sweet or bitter waters,—and *sweet or bitter they will be*, according to the care or neglect with which they are attended by the teachers and parents. To secure the fertilizing streams of healthful knowledge, and their happy issues into the ocean of intelligence, we recommend the co-operation of every citizen with the officers of education appointed by the town, as well as those appointed by the State, in the great work of cleansing these sources of

knowledge, in making our public schools places of purity, and, consequently, of civility, friendship, true courtesy, and accomplishment; so that the reproach of rudeness of manners, vulgarity, profanity, and every species of vice, may be removed far from our schools and our community; so that we may reasonably hope that all succeeding generations may be better men and women, more intelligent citizens, more virtuous husbands and wives. To this end, we also recommend the maintenance of good order in our schools. Indeed, without this, we insist that nothing good can be well accomplished. Gentlemen, we will suppose you think upon this point as we do; it will then follow that you will say to your children, at the commencement of a school-session to which you propose to send them, "Children, I wish you to obey your teacher; *see that you do so, if you wish to secure my approbation.*" And, above all, let no petty scandal be circulated through the *district*, to the detriment of the teacher, as such a course is enough, in all ordinary cases, to ensure the entire failure of a whole term of school. Your Committee think, that, if the above suggestions were heeded by parents, it would in a great measure cure the evils of disorder in our schools.

And we further suggest, as we feel it our duty to do, a similar course in reference to the subject of profanity; and inquire if it might not result in removing this great evil, at least, from the sacred bounds of our associate youth. How often do we hear the unwelcome, but too true, remark, that our children learn more evil than good at the common schools! This ought not to be; yet, if parents *will* be blind to the faults of their children, nay, in some instances encourage by their example what all good citizens should try to remove, how can we hope for any thing better? The most intelligent teachers nor the

most efficient Committee in the Union could not roll back the tide of profanity and obscenity, while all these things were passed over lightly by the parents at home. Oh, how pernicious, contaminating, and soul-destroying is the foul-mouthed youth in the high associations of a public school of young immortals! Think of the many buds of excellent promise together opening their petals to drink in the dews of science,—think of them, we say, gradually unfolding to receive these genial influences, when all at once the sweetened cup is dashed from their lips, and the bitter chalice of profane words, vile oaths, obscene, withering night-damps of pollution and death, is poured into their young, confiding minds! Who should not, who does not, deplore the extent of profanity in our common schools? Let, then, that man whose son uses it restrain him effectually,—restrain him, at least, while within the sacred enclosure of our public schools,—if he would hope to escape the censure of a virtuous and indignant community. Let him remember, too, that a good example in this respect, as elsewhere, will have much to do in righting the wrong.

In passing, your Committee will remark, that we think the school-room an inappropriate place for the use of tobacco, as it is neither food for the mind or body, neither medicine or protection, nor does it minister to health or happiness, to virtue or cleanliness, in youth or age; but, on the contrary, it is disease to the mind and body, undermines the health by its poisonous qualities, blunts the senses, and renders obtuse all the powers of the mind, offends good taste, and, in short, is diametrically opposed to all the good sought by our schools; and, as it is banished from all virtuous and refined society, so should it be from every school-room.

In relation to furniture in the school-rooms, we recom-

mend that each school-room be so altered as to have one side of it one entire blackboard, similar to the one at No. 7. We think the benefit derived from such an alteration would in a few years far more than pay the expense, and that the reforms in these matters demand the alteration at your hands. We commend this thing to the wisdom and intelligence of the town, to act their pleasure upon it.

Although your Committee think very well of the list of books which they have prescribed, yet we will take the liberty to recommend to our successors in office a change in the reading-books, from Leavitt's Series to Russell's. We are the more inclined to do this, as Russell's is already in our schools to some extent.

It now only remains for us to notice each school in particular, and very briefly; premising, that we may be understood, that we use the terms, *bad*, *moderate*, *good*, *very good*, and *excellent*, as descriptive of the schools:—

School No. 1, Summer	Very good.
„ No. 1, Winter, 1st session	Moderate.
„ No. 1, Winter, 2d session	Very good.
„ No. 2, Summer	Excellent.
„ No. 2, Winter	Excellent.
„ No. 3, Summer	Good.
„ No. 3, Winter	Good.
„ No. 4, Summer	Excellent.
„ No. 4, Winter	Very good.
„ No. 5, Summer	Very good.
„ No. 5, Winter	Excellent.
„ No. 6, Summer	Excellent.
„ No. 6, Winter	Very good.
„ No. 7, Summer	Very good.
„ No. 7, Winter	Very good.

The winter session in No. 7 was improved by singing, very much, to the gratification of the Committee and

visitors; and much to the credit and skill of the teacher. It is an accomplishment the attainment of which we recommend to all our schools.

We speak with pleasure, also, of the continued presence of a goodly number of parents and guardians and friends of education at our public examinations. We esteem it an excellent index of right feeling on this subject; and may the day be distant when it shall be any less clear and striking!

Happy in our schools as the fountains of intelligence, and in our religious associations as the sources of life and happiness, may we and coming generations rise to new heights of science and wisdom, knowledge and power, honor and glory, in endless progression!

(See table on following page.)

CHARLES W. WALKER,
WILLIAM MUCHEMORE,
DAVID ALDEN, } School
 } Committee of
 } Southborough.

SOUTHBOROUGH, *March 1, 1852.*

Wards.	Wages of Males per month.	Wages of Females per month.	Board of Males per month.	Board of Females per month.	Whole No. of Scholars in summer.	Whole No. of Scholars in winter.	Average Attendance in summer.	Average Attendance in winter.	Names of Teachers in summer.	Names of Teachers in winter.
No. 1 { 1st bess. 2d bess.	\$20.00 \$22.00	\$9.00	\$8.00	\$7.00	35	49	28 $\frac{5}{6}$	42 $\frac{1}{2}$	Emily Badger	J. M. Fletcher John B. Sawin
No. 2	20.00	8.00	8.00	6.00	33	42	25	31	Ellen C. Rice	P. P. Howe
No. 3	20.00	8.00	8.00	6.00	38	47	30 $\frac{2}{3}$	34	Mary E. Andrews	J. O. Bernis
No. 4	22.00	8.00	8.00	6.00	28	40	16	29	Maria Whiting	W. E. Barnard
No. 5	22.00	8.00	8.00	6.00	30	40	22.64	36 $\frac{1}{6}$	H. J. Johnson	H. H. Johnson
No. 6	21.50	8.00	8.00	6.00	31	35	25 $\frac{1}{3}$	27 $\frac{1}{4}$	Althea Gibbs	T. B. Forbush
No. 7	22.00	8.00	9.00	6.00	38	40	28 $\frac{1}{3}$	28 $\frac{1}{2}$	M. A. Sawin	T. M. Burdett
Total 7	\$149.50	57.00	57.00	43.00	233	293	177	229		